

THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
UNFORTUNATE SISTERS,
OR
DISTRESSED LADIES.

BEING

An Account of one Mr. Ward, who enjoyed a Place in one of the public Offices in London, of 300l. per Year; married a young Lady with a handsome Fortune, by whom he had six Children, which he educated in a more elegant Manner than his Income would allow, 'till the two eldest, Lucy and Polly, were fit for Marriage: two young Gentlemen in the Neighbourhood paid their addresses to them, and promised them Marriage, on Condition of portioning them off; Mr. Ward not being able, they declined their Addresses. The dreadful Scene which happened after, contains such alarming Circumstances in common Life, as are too frequent, and may be justly said to be a Lesson proper to be read by all who have any Regard to themselves or Families.

To which is Added

THE
H I S T O R Y
OF
BEAUMONT.
OR THE
GENEROUS LOVER.

LONDON:

Printed by J. MILLER, at the Blue Anchor in Mint-
Street, SOUTHWARK.

T H E

Unfortunate Sisters.

THE father of those ladies was a gentleman who enjoyed a place in one of the public offices in London, of three hundred pounds per year, which he had received for upwards of eighteen years: he having a wife and six daughters, he gave his children all the education usual in polite families, Mrs Ward having a good education herself, and had brought her husband a fortune, and was a woman of extraordinary parts, gaining good will and affection of every body who had the pleasure of her acquaintance; and the same perfections in her family was the constant care she took to inculcate into her children's minds, and was no way backward in teaching them what might accrue to their future advantages, she being an affectionate and tender mother.

Mr. Ward and his wife, being blessed many years in conjugal happiness, began now to think of settling, as soon as opportunity served, such of their children as was of maturity, and in particular Miss Polly and Lucy, the two eldest, who were marriageable. He being now in the decline of life, upwards of fifty, his wife took an opportunity to enquire into his circumstances, hoping



hoping he had made some provision for his children, Mrs. Ward well knowing that education, without pecuniary fortune, commands but little in this world: he gave her no account of his affairs, and seemed to want to turn the discourse, and looked at her with arrogance, for desiring to be satisfied in that particular. Indeed he kept a good house, loved his family and friend, kept a genteel acquaintance, and seemed to enjoy perfect happiness; but here fate seemed to cloud the sunshine of their life, for Mrs. Ward was a woman of more sense than to be silent on such material affairs, wherein depended the future happiness of her children: her thoughts for them was now not to be moved by the pleasures of this life, but was fixed for those she could not now expect to be long guardians of, and was endeavouring to see as many settled in life as she could. She did not complain for want of any thing, neither indeed could she, for Mr. Ward always readily granted whatever she asked, 'till this last important question, which she took the opportunity to put to him again, and with tears in her eyes, desired him to be final in his answer. He began to divert her mind with telling her of an invitation; she told him that it was not the thoughts of pleasure could turn her enquiry, and that if he had not made any provision for his children to satisfy her at once, that she might endeavour to prevent the bad consequences which might happen in case of his death, for that if he had not, she could expect nothing but misery, having never had any insight into
trade,

trade, nor no expectancies from friends, so that hope was driven from her breast of ever doing any thing for her family, all which she hoped providence would avert; but as an affectionate mother, she could not help guarding against the worst which might happen. Mr. Ward, at this preemptory discourse, seemed in a great passion, and was going to leave the room, wondered how she could question his conduct, and asked her if she wanted any thing? and added that he had always taken care of the immediate substance of life, in a genteel manner, and so he had of the future, and left her no farther satisfied.

This behaviour occasioned a flood of tears from Mrs. Ward, she never had met with such usage before, which, at that time of day, added more to her grief, being married thirty years, and never met with an interview of behaviour comparable to this: however, this passed off without the knowledge of any but themselves; but Mrs. Ward, after this, observed a coolness in her husband's temper, which she, like an indulgent wife, endeavoured to warm, and every thing seemed as before: nevertheless, there dwelt upon the brows of Mrs. Ward a tender concern which she had grafted in her heart for her dear children.

Miss Lucy and Polly, the two eldest daughters, had now both of them suitors, young tradesmen of good fortunes, and, no doubt, expected fortunes with them, which is now generally expected with people of a genteel appearance,

pearance. These gentlemen had the sanction of their parents, and their visits were frequent, and after a year and half's courtship, Miss Lucy, who was the eldest, her sweetheart had brought things to a crisis, and, between themselves, had fixed the time when they should unite, and consummate the happy and honourable state of marriage. Nothing now was wanting to finish their expectations of joy, but the tender of Miss Lucy's fortune, which Miss Lucy herself, from her genteel education, little imagining was wanting, desired her suitor to ask her parents the question, which he accordingly did to Mrs. Ward first, desiring her to give him an answer in two or three days, which she, poor woman promised.

So great was the burthen of woe she was under at this question (being conscious of the last solicitations to her husband on this head) that she retired to her chamber, and vented her sorrow by a flood of tears, so deep was the torrent of anguish which overflowed her breast, she even wished for madness as a relief, that she might be lost to herself. However, after some consideration, when her grief had a little subsided, she concluded to put the question again to Mr. Ward, and get a positive answer, that she might acquaint her daughter, and no longer bury them up with hopes, and accordingly did as she intended. One morning, before her husband was up, she acquainted him with the whole, and how his daughter Lucy wanted nothing now but to know what fortune he would
give

give her, that she might fulfil her engagements with her sweetheart, which she told him he could not be ignorant of. He at this seemed shocked, and at last told her that he was sorry she should take part of his misfortune, for that he was not worth forty pounds in the world, and begged of her to make herself easy, and desired of her to let her daughters know their condition, that they might no longer deceive their suitors. Mrs. Ward was now in the utmost confusion, truth had at last lighted up her blazing torch, and now seemed to follow the hand of black despair, and every moment she was distracted with fears for what was to come; she prudently avoided reflecting on her husband, it being past redemption, and to acquaint her children of it abruptly, she feared would tend to bad consequences, however, she thought delays might breed dangers, she took the first opportunity of acquainting Miss Lucy's suitor that Mr. Ward could give his daughter no immediate fortune, but that he would leave her something at his death. This offer was nothing with the young suitor, he wanted a sum down; and after this was soon observed to be very cool and loose in his addresses to Miss Lucy, and in short, presently abandoned all his pretended honour, and made a bold attempt on her virtue, on the most

wicked

wicked and horrid promise of keeping her as a mistress, telling her she had no fortune. At this sudden change, the poor innocent lady stood aghast, as tho' struck with terror, and in broken expression, asked him what he meant? He replied, *as she had no fortune she could expect no advancement, and a compliance to his will would be more advantageous to her, for he should withdraw his addresses; but that if she would consent, he'd settle something upon her, to make her appear genteel, and she should want nothing; but he could not marry without a fortune.*

As soon as she had recovered her surprise, she replied, *Oh! Sir, I see your drift, my want of fortune has soon cooled your passion and your love.—No, Sir, let my suffering be ever so great, let my sorrows and hardships be ever so much encreased upon my head, I am determined to resist your horrid design, and would rather submit to all the agonies of a painful death, than move one step from my fixed resolution, or ever become the detested and abject wretch you desire: Wonder not, Sir, at my firmness, nor be surpris'd to see a poor weak defenceless young creature able to withstand both your delusions and meanness. Know, Sir, while virtue is my guardian I shall ever dare to look you in the face, and defy you, villain as you are! and begone from my sight.* This noble

noble defence of Miss Lucy, was highly commendable, and shewed a greatness of soul in adversity.

However, tho' she had courage to defend herself against an immediate attack, yet her affection for him could not be so soon forgot, for she went melancholy upon the occasion; words cannot express the distress of mind she was in at so great a disappointment, and also an attempt to destroy her; in short, after a month languishing in this grief, she fell into despair, and found means to poison herself. The sudden horror and surprise the whole family was in, are not to be expressed by words, and the whole of this shocking affair was soon known; nothing but the most bitter expressions against the perjured young fellow, her sweetheart, was heard, by all who had the least intimation of it; in short, he was despised by every body, and degraded in all companies, and such we hope, will all like him ever be, and all who dare attempt the innocent in such inhuman characters.

Mr. Ward, at the death of his daughter, fell sick, being conscious of the cause; but he shortly after recovered, so as to be able to attend his office, yet there seemed something upon his brows which bespoke uneasiness, which added no small trouble to his affectionate

affectionate wife, who had nothing to support her distress but a good conscience. Mr. Ward's dearest friends could not get this cloud of despair from him, tho' they did all they could by taking him into the country, yet all was to no purpose, every body judged the cause by the loss of his daughter, by so fatal an end, yet there was another as great; in the first place, there was his next daughter, Polly, almost flood in the same case; and next, being sensible he was drawing near to death himself, and what was much greater, he had no provision for his four other children, nor no relation that was capable of giving them any subsistence, nor any expectations from friends.

This was the inward grief of his heart; at all times in his favourite company, he had lost his usual countenance; a melancholy composure sat upon his brow, in short, all attempts of his friends to divert his mind, proved ineffectual. His tender wife finding him in this low way, never troubled him with any further enquiries concerning his circumstances, as he seemed to deny satisfying her before, and left it to divine providence to help her in distress. if the worst should happen; but he had lain to heart that which he might have prevented, by a frugal living to save, instead of a lavish grandeur

deur to appear great above others, without a reserve of substance for the future maintenance of a family, and which is much to be lamented, that too many parents are guilty of that great neglect, and not for want of love, but rather to follow the fashionable vice of this corrupt age, whereby many persons are disappointed and ruined, when they have lost all hopes of living and enjoying what they expected.

Mr. Ward was sensibly declining every day, which his family were not strangers to; therefore they resolved not to trouble him with enquiries, it being too late to recall past misconduct, therefore trusted all to providence to enable and direct them for the best.

His next daughter, Polly, was still courted by the same young gentleman, who had all along invieghed against unfortunate Miss Lucy's suitor, who had occasioned such grief in the family, and always expressed the greatest abhorrence of all his actions. He vowed the strongest ties of love and friendship to Miss Polly, assuring her, let what will happen, he would ever adhere to his promise of marrying her, and desired the same assurances from her, and their loves and vows they reciprocally plighted to each other.

This young gentleman was the son of a tradesman in the same neighbourhood, of great

great worth, who thought it rather too soon for him to marry, yet, nevertheless, approved of his choice, not doubting in the least, but that Mr. Ward had wherewith to give a fortune agreeable to his, and seldom a day passed but they enjoyed each others company. which was agreeable to all parties.

Mrs. Ward, who was sensible of his friends desire of a sufficient fortune with her daughter, was likewise sensible of the want of it. Here was a tryal an affectionate mother must feel, that words cannot express, and which every parent must sympathise for her distress. Fate seemed now to cloud the sunshine of their days: first, the fatal end of their eldest daughter, occasioned by a perfidious man; and secondly, her next daughter stood upon a tottering precipice, together with the illness of Mr. Ward, who did not expect long to survive; and the leaving four other daughters all young and unprovided for, tho' unknown to any but herself; this was such a secret that Mrs. Ward would not trust her dearest friend, well knowing, when the world gets hold of the truth. much falshood generally accompanies it, and never fails lessening the esteem the world had of them; yet nevertheless, she comforted herself, by knowing some people, who, tho' in great distress, had by the hand of providence been won.

wonderfully raised out of it, and doubted not but God would assist her in distress.

Mr. Ward still kept lingering, and in about sixteen months after he died, and left her as she thought, without any thing material for her family and herself to subsist on, and he in debt, to whom she knew nothing of, nor for what; here was the fearful scene disclosed; she solicited the creditors, by ingeniously telling them her husband had died insolvent, and her and her family in the greatest distress, and begged them to forgive her, and hoped God would restore it double; upon which the creditors consulted, and considered her case, agree to forgive her husband's debts, and made a collection among their acquaintance to help her in her distress, which she kindly accepted, and returned God and them thanks for such unexpected friends and comforters.

All their acquaintances was much surprised, and the conversation every where turned upon the death of Mr. Ward, and the distress he had left his family in; for death generally opens a new scene in every family. Many friends came to express their sorrow for her condition, and to condole her loss; but alas! this was cool comfort, she stood in need of assistance, and not of sorrowful compliments.

After

After Mr. Ward was buried she was obliged to seek for another habitation, being unable to keep her house any longer, having nothing coming in, and five daughters unprovided for; her friends advised her to many things for the best: here she now saw the true picture of the world, for now she was in distress, some of her friends declined acquaintance, but at last God raised her up a friend, an unexpected friend indeed: a maiden gentlewoman who had heard of her circumstances and condition, and whose life was spent in assisting her fellow creatures, heaven had blest with a plentiful fortune, which she considered in a right view, she had never entered into matrimony, not through a disapprobation of that honourable state, but through an inclination to be incumbered with the world as little as possible.

As she made it her business to seek for proper objects of relief, when she was informed of the distressed situation of Mrs. Ward, she immediately took her into an apartment, with her five children, in her own house, and was the greatest contributor to the maintainance of this distressed family, and kept them for six months, 'till Mrs. Ward had consulted what to do for a living for herself and family.

The kindness of this gentlewoman, Mrs. Ward always expressed a thorough sense of, and did not neglect to return God and her donor thanks for such a timed and comfortable relief. This charitable gentlewoman, and others of Mrs. Ward's well-wishers, advised her to go into some business, which she consented to very chearfully, being

being not inclined, as her unfortunate husband was, to appear above what she really was, which was the main rock the whole family split on.

Accordingly she took a shop in the millenery and haberdashery way, in their own neighbourhood, which was judged best by her acquaintance, and all promised her their favours; in short, every body was pleased that knew her, and expressed gladness that they could contribute to her assistance. The business Mrs. Ward had, in a little time gave her hopes of being in a happy situation: she maintained her family with decency, without being drove to necessities, and in a very short time, by her acquaintances favours and recommendations, she at last arrived at a pretty height of business, and had as genteel a shop as most, every thing seemed to concur in favouring her in a happy settlement, for which she ever retained a grateful sense of God's providence, and her friends kindness.

Mrs. Ward's next daughter, whom we mentioned before, was courted by a young gentleman who still continued his courtship to Miss Polly, and was a kind friend to Mrs. Ward, but this was kept a secret to his friends, who, when Mr. Ward died, and it came to be known he had left nothing for his family, they forbid him carrying on his suit, or having any further correspondence with the family, which he did almost all the time Mrs. Ward was at her kind donor's house, but when she came to be settled in her own shop and house, his visits were frequent to Miss Polly, and he renewed his courtship

ship and told Mrs. Ward he meant nothing but honour, and altho' his friends did not consent, yet, as he had at first made his suit to her, and promised her marriage, he would not deceive her, for his love for her was settled long before her father died, and should still continue. and as his friends did not approve of it he would not make the marriage known, and that if the worst should happen he said he had a small fortune independent of his relations, and intirely in his own hands. Mrs. Ward answered him, that she hoped he would no ways deceive her, adding, that she had but just allayed a storm, which threatened her destruction, and begged of him that he would be ingenious, and finally let her know his real intentions : to which he replied, that her past misfortunes need not be mentioned, as he was fully acquainted with them, and told her his intentions were then as they were at first, fixed upon love and honour, and gave her the strongest assurances of his friendship towards her family, and in particular to Miss Polly, to whom he hoped to be soon joined by mutual contract, in wedlock, and desired it might be kept a secret to his friends, but not that he would always have it kept secret from them, but till such time as he had reasoned them into consent, that every thing might concur to make them happy.

Now every thing seemed fair for a happy union, and consultations were frequently held between them how they should order the marriage, Mrs. Ward consented, and the marriage day was fixed, and she engaged a friend of hers to give her

her daughter away in marriage, declining going herself to avoid any suspicion. Mr. Harris told them he would come at the time appointed, and he'd take care to have the licence: accordingly he came and a coach ready, and Miss Polly and the gentleman who was to give her away, privately stepped into the coach and drove away. Now cruel fate was beginning again his destructive hand, and tho' Mrs. Ward, poor woman, had taken every step that was upon the surest foundation, for her daughter's happiness, yet such is sometimes the cruelty of fortune, which will appear by what follows.

As they were going in the coach to church, Mr. Harris, the bridegroom, says, good God! I have forgot the licence; upon this they ordered the coach to drive to the commons to get one, but when they came there it was a holiday, and no business done. This was a great disappointment, they now knew not what to do, they went to a tavern to consider what was to be done; the bridegroom declared with all the vows the human tongue is able to express, that if Miss Polly would agree with her friend to go home and say the marriage was done, to satisfy her mother, he would take the first opportunity, some time the next week, to finish the marriage, and that he would go the next day to get the licence, desiring her friend, who was to be father, to let him know what day the next week he should be at leisure, that he might appoint the time, and make no more meetings, but to come and make an excuse, by saying that you
are

are come to give us a day's pleasure abroad, that there might be no suspicion of the matter, and then the whole might be done.

At these expressions Miss Polly looked in his face with tears falling down her cheeks, said, dear Mr. Harris do not deceive me, consider the gulph of misery my poor sister was lost in; and the affliction and distress my poor mother has hardly yet got over. Can I depend on the words of a man? I have found nothing yet that would give me the least mistrust of deviating from an honest man; if my friend will give his consent, I will do any thing you shall require, in short her consent was her friend's also, and he was so weak as not to bind Mr. Harris down by bond, to fulfil his promise, and after having spent the time as the thing might have been finished, they went home with full assurances that all was done, and Mrs. Ward saluted them, and wished them joy, being glad the whole was over with secrecy; after which dinner was provided, and they spent the day in such innocent amusements as is usual. At night they went to bed, and finally consummated the marriage before the ceremony.

The next morning Mr. Harris went home to his father, who questioned him concerning his staying out all night, and with having been to be married to Miss Ward, which

he denied, they insisted he had, he declared not, (which was too true) they vowed if he had married her, he should immediately go from them, and they would leave him nothing, after he had made many protestations to the contrary, the argument subsided, and the whole passed off.

Mr. Harris went the next day to assure Polly of his unalterable mind, which she earnestly desired him to fulfill, he was almost always with her, and had procured the licence, so that they only waited an opportunity. Mr. Harris's father and mother suspected something, by his not keeping good hours as he used to do, they contrived to send him a journey for a month, thinking, by that means, if there was any close union, it would some how or other be discovered. He accordingly acquainted Polly of what, and where he was going, and bid her make herself easy: at this she could not tell what to imagine, her mind was almost distracted, and tho' he had given her the strongest assurances of his love and fidelity, she could not be easy, she was too sensible what a precipice she stood upon, and not a friend in the world she dare tell her mind to; no, not to her mother. This must be a great trouble to her, she was forced to smother her perplexed thoughts in her own breast, which is the great-

greatest trouble the human mind can be afflicted with; in short, poor lady, her countenance soon shewed her disease, but not the least intimation of her case was known.

After he had been gone about a week she received a letter from him, which somewhat allayed her ardent wishes for his return, tho' unfortunate lady, she had something hung heavy on her mind she could no ways shake off, she had parted with that which never could be returned, and the only means to secure her from public disgrace was his fidelity and honour. Thus, in uneasy thoughts, passed every long and tedious hour 'till his return, and according to the appointment of his letter he came, on purpose to enjoy her company a day or two, without letting any body else know he was in town. His presence dispeled the present fear from her mind, and glad she had another opportunity to let him know how much she desired him to finish what he knew was not done, and till then she could receive no real peace of mind. He told her she might rest contented, and be assured whatever she requested should be done.

He then went home to his father's, as tho' just come off his journey, without the least suspicion of having been to Mrs. Ward's, nevertheless his friends was continually teaz-

ing

ing him and challenging him with still keeping company with Miss Ward, and that they would leave him nothing if he did; on the other hand, Miss Polly, in fact his wife, by the ties of love and promise, was constantly urging him to fulfil his promise, which, he now being diffident for fear of a discovery, could not find an opportunity to perform, that, in short, both their minds was a burthen for them to bear. To think of their distress my tears almost prevents my pursuing the fatal history; yet, as truths shocking as these, may warn the unexperienced, and teach the unwary how cautious they ought to be, I will endeavour to finish.

Miss Ward, or rather Mrs. Harris, grew now very big with child, and kept up from seeing any body, she was continually desiring Mr. Harris, that if ever he intended to make her or himself happy, to marry her at once and be satisfied with what small fortune he had in his own hands, and added, she had rather work for him with ease of mind, than live as she did, or with the enjoyment of all he was in hopes of. He told her she need not doubt his fidelity and love, that he would ever be her comforter, and that he could say no more, and as to his small fortune it was but forty pounds a year. He still pressed her for a little patience, something

thing would soon turn to their advantage. From this very moment she began to think of destroying herself; and she soon found an opportunity. No tongue can express the horror of mind she was continually in upon this occasion, she could no longer withstand her misery, her mother knew not the real cause, the reader can best judge the distress she was in. She being big with child, and drawing near the time of her delivery, was certainly the cause of her fatal end, for one evening, after she had embraced her mother with more than ordinary tenderness, she went up stairs, and there cut her throat.

This fatal circumstance happening, the whole was soon known to the world, which shortly broke the heart of Mrs. Ward. Thus how soon a family is undone, either for want of caution, or trusting too much to promises. We hope, by this example, all who hears this dismal story will endeavour to avoid the same unhappy circumstances.

BEAUMONT.

[12]

B E A U M O N T,
O R T H E
G E N E R O U S L O V E R.

MR. Hulatt, a gentleman of great fortune, had formerly shone with distinguished lustre at the bar. By his integrity and excellence in his profession, he had gained no small share of wealth, which, being added to, a very fine estate his father had left him at his death, made him immensely rich. He had only one son, named Beaumont, a young gentleman adorned with every perfection that honours human nature. He had an excellent taste for music, painting, and the belles lettres; he danced admirably, had great skill in fencing, understood perfectly the different customs and manners of different nations, was well versed in human nature; was humane, brave and generous; in short, he was possessed of as many excellencies, and as free from foible, as a youth of his age could possibly be, for he was not quite twenty.

With these amiable shining qualifications, it is no wonder he should be the delight of his father and the favourite of his neighbours. The old gentleman was perfectly wrapped up in his son, and could not look on him without the most sensible pleasure.

One

One morning, as he was in his room, he called Beaumont to him, and surveying him with a truly paternal affection, spoke to him as follows, *Son, you cannot be unconscious of the tender affection I have ever borne you; I am every day more and more delighted with you growing virtues, nor can I reproach you with a single act you have ever done to displease me. But now, Beaumont, continued he, it is time for you to alter your condition; I mean of entering into the matrimonial state: you are now of a proper age, and by acting as prudently in this new scene of life as you have hitherto done in others, I shall, with pleasure, see my name perpetuated and my child happy.*

Beaumont answered his father in the most dutiful and respectful manner he could. He told him that he had such a true affection and esteem for him as a man, independant of his duty to him as a father, that he would obey him whenever a fit opportunity presented itself; but hitherto he had never thought seriously of so weighty an affair. With this prudent answer, Mr. Hulatt was well satisfied, and then dismissed him.

Soon after this, when Beaumont came to age, the old gentleman gave a ball to all the neighbouring gentry; his house was gloriously illuminated with wax lights, the bells rung for joy, and nought but mirth and jolity was seen.

To this ball, among others, came a gentleman whom I shall call Urban. He had, in his youth, been a very accomplished gentleman, and bred up
in

in the expectation of a large fortune ; but it unfortunately happened that his parents had sustained great losses, he was at length obliged to retire in the country upon the small pittance which was left, being scarce sixty pounds a year.

With this, however, being an excellent œconomist. he lived very genteel, and was respected by every body ; but, as he was confined to a very narrow scene of life, he lived more like a philosopher, than a man conversant in the affairs of the world, yet his obscurity could not conceal his merit.

Mr. Urban had a sister in London, a widow, of a large fortune, who being childless, had taken Cleora his daughter, and bred her up as her own. The old gentleman had been accustomed to go there every third year to see her, but as he had lately resolved against it, yet vastly desirous of seeing Cleora, he wrote for her to come into the country to stay a few months with him.

To the ball Cleora now came with her father. at her entrance all the company seemed astonished, but none more than Beaumont: he was as one thunder struck : his eyes were never off her, nor indeed is it to be wondered at, for this, reader, is but a very feint description of her charms. Her hair was of a chesnut brown, her complexion fair, in her countenance a sensibility appeared almost incredible ; and a sweetness, whenever she smiled which beggar'd all imitation or description, her eyes were black and sparkling, her forehead high, her eyebrows arched, and rather

ther full than otherwise—her nose a little inclining to the Roman, which gave her a look full of dignity—a mouth on which every grace seemed to have sat, her teeth white and even, lips not inferior to the coral in colour, or down in softness, her neck white and beautiful, her breasts inexpressibly ravishing, her shape delicately fine and beautifully pleasing, and over her whole form appeared irresistible charms, which intirely subdued the heart of the spectator, and gave him an invincible pleasure.

With these personal graces, these attractive accomplishments, we may reasonably conclude that, had they refrained their admiration, they must have been mere brutes, insensible of the powers of beauty, and unconscious of the charms of the fair sex: but there is no describing the pleasure that Beaumont took in looking on her; he gazed and gazed, 'till his heart followed his eyes, and could not be recalled. At length, fearing the company would take notice of him, he went to Mr. Urban, and thanked him for the honour of his company and the young ladies, who, continued he, had I the happiness of knowing, I should endeavour to thank as I ought.

Mr. Urban told him she was his daughter, who, being always bred in London under an affectionate aunt, and he being vastly desirous of seeing her, yet unwilling to go there any more, he had ordered her to come into the country. Beaumont then entered into conversation with him on various subjects, but his eyes and thoughts were never off Cleora.

D

The

The ball being now very near beginning, Beaumont begged the favour of dancing with Cleora, which Mr. Urban readily granted. The young lady therefore was delivered into his hands, and Mr. Hulatt now coming up to her father, after mutual salutations, the old gentlemen entered into close discourse together, but on what subject I have never been able to learn with any certainty, yet, from the known disposition of old people, apprehend it might be inveighing against the vices of the age, praising times of yore, and discoursing on politicks.

Beaumont, now happy with his partner, was blessed to his heart's desire: how earnestly did he gaze on the fair Cleora! how did his eyes shoot forth the emanations of his soul! how did his tongue lavish encomiums on her beauty! and grow wanton on her perfections! but Cleora, to whom such actions and discourse were familiar, took but little notice of them: not but what we must suppose, such a young gentleman as Beaumont talked in a different style from the common chit chat of our modern youths; but Cleora whose prudence and good sense had determined her to pay no regard to any one but who was approved of by her father, was steeled against any thing that should be said to her. Tho' she did not implicitly believe all young Beaumont said to her, she could not be blind to his engaging manner of discourse, and was as much ravished by his skill in dancing, as he could be by hers.

How short did that long evening seem to our lover! the rapid hours flew away like flashes of lightning,

lightning, he could eternally have talked to and gazed on the fair Cleora.

The ball was now finished, to his great regret. Mr. Urban and his daughter soon after took their leave. With eager eyes the love struck Beaumont follows his mistress: his heart is still with her; but alas! he dare not follow her.

The company being all withdrawn, Beaumont bidding his father good night, retires to his chamber, but not to sleep. Even all the livelong night he thinks of Cleora, and love denies him rest.

While the dull solemn sons of stupidity, free from the power of mighty love, consign themselves to the God of sleep, and enjoy an undisturbed repose, this accomplished youth thinks on his charming partner: he revives in his mind all her charms, and the discrete answers she made to his discourse. These rivet him still closer to her, and he is determined to pursue her; for tho' external beauties may for a while fire in his breast, yet the mental accomplishments with which Cleora is endued, entirely ravish his soul.

The night, tho' he had been thinking on her, had never seemed so long. How often did he wish Phaeton would take the reigns of day from the beautiful Aurora, and drive her fiery horses with more than common speed, but in vain. At length the morn appeared; when rising from his bed, his heart hurried him towards Mr. Urban's house, without his once determining where to go.

Being now near it, he paused of a sudden — What am I doing? says the youth. Am I acting prudently, to fly to one at this early time of

morn, whom I scarcely know, and who may probably be pre-engaged to to some more happy man. Certainly, no.

After reasoning the affair pro and con some hours, at last love discovered, and he was at Mr. Urban's door, just as his daughter and himself were at breakfast: The old gentleman asked Beaumont if he had breakfasted? who answering in the negative, he sat down with them; and entering into a deep conversation with each other, he conceived a greater opinion of Mr. Urban than ever he had before, the reason of which, I presume, appears pretty obvious.

They had not talked a great while together, before Mr. Urban withdrew, to speak to a gentleman on particular business, which gave Beaumont an opportunity of declaring his passion; which he did in such a manner, that Cleora, blushing, was about to make a favourable answer, had not her father that instant returned: for Beaumont did not follow the example of the modern heroes of romance, who, when left alone with their mistresses, are so awed by the excess of their passion, that their tongues cannot declare the sentiments of their hearts; far from it, he poured out his love for her in such passionate such eloquent expressions as that tender passion can alone inspire its votaries with. Beaumont, tho' he had the highest respect for Mr. Urban, yet at that time would have thought his absence more agreeable than his company.

After

After a few days had passed, in which time Beaumont revolved in his breast the unsurmountable obstacles which stood in his way, in his intended and much desired union with Cleora; no longer able to be deprived of her sight, and willing at once to declare the ardent and fixed affection he had for her, he wrote her the following letter.

Dear Madam,

SINCE I had the pleasure of seeing you, I have never ceased reflecting on the many perfections you so eminently possess. The excess of affection which the first moment I saw you I could not help bearing you, was surely impossible to be concealed; for tho' my tongue was silent on the pleasing theme, yet my eyes, the faithful interpreters of the heart, must have informed you no less powerfully what I felt. The faint expression I gave you of my sensations the day after, was so inadequate, that, pardon me, Madam, if I could not resist this occasion of telling you how much I love. But here indeed, I am at the greatest loss. My pen is not sufficient to declare the excess of my passion, for alas! my dearest Cleora, no words can paint, no language support, no tongue can shadow how much I love you. To morrow I must do myself the pleasure of seeing you. in expectation of which happy time, I remain my dear Cleora's ever faithful lover,

BEAUMONT.

This letter he sent by his servant, who on his return, told his master he had delivered it into Cleora's hands; who returned no other answer than her compliments.

In the afternoon of the next day he waited on her, but unfortunately for him, Mr. Urban was at home. He was therefore obliged
to

to talk on indifferent subjects; and after staying a few hours, withdrew.

Three or four times more did Beaumont wait on his Cleora, before he had an opportunity of meeting with her alone, but at last kind fortune favoured him. Mr. Urban was gone to a neighbouring gentleman, who wanted to consult him in an affair of the last importance, and was not expected home 'till the evening. This so fortunate opportunity Beaumont embraced. He threw himself at her feet, and by his every word and gesture, so powerfully evinced his love, and shewed his sincerity, that the fair one could not but believe him? yet concealing her sentiments, as far as she could, she told him that she could not give him any direct answer. That their fathers should be consulted in an affair of so great importance, and without their consent she could not on any account dispose of herself, or indeed give any kind of answer.

To this prudent speech, Beaumont answered that his love for her was so pure that could she but know his sincerity, she could not be so severe to him: and that, was he but assured he was not indifferent to her, he should be happy.

With these and many other arguments, Beaumont so far softened his fair Cleora, that at last, with a sigh, she confessed a mutual love.

love. The youth was so transported with the generous declaration, that, in the height of his extacy, he proposed a marriage in secret; but this the prudent maid would not consent to. She told him, that when ever his father heard of it, he would be erritated, that the consequences would be fatal, that he might depend on her love' and, when a fit opportunity presented itself, she would be wholly his, but was deiermined never to engage in so weighty an affair without her father's knowledge; and as Beaumont's duty to his frther, was as justly due as hers to Mr. Urban, if he would reflect ever so little, he could not think of such an affair without his consent.

Beaumont, transported with her prudence and her love, tederly embraced her. He told her that her sentiments were right, and that he would solicit his father's consent, without which he must be eternally unhappy. In this manner did these lovers employ their time, till Mr. Urban's arrival shortly after which Beaumont withdrew.

Day after day passed away, without his being able to desire his father's consent. In the mean time the greatest misfortune happened to Mr. Urban, a banker, in whose hands almost his whole fortune lay, was gone off and no tidings could be heard of him.

A great many months had now rolled away, since Beaumont had first resolved to ask his father's consent; till one dty after dinner, when Mr. Hulatt was in a more than usual good humour, Beaumont discovered his love for Cleora. He told his fathec he could not live without her, and begged of him to conient to their marriage. The old gentleman had hardly patience to hear his son, and starting from his chair in a furious mood, upbraided him for his mean way of thinking, as he called it, and threatened to disinherit him, if ever he mentiondd it any more.

The next morning, unable to keep away from his dear Cleora, ee paid her a visit; and while he was informing her of what had happened, his servant came to him in a violenz hurry, and informed him, his father was suddenly taken with an apoplectic fit, and was so ill, that he could live but a very short time. Beaumont no sooner was acquainted with his father's danger, than he flew home like lightning. He found him in the parlour, on a couch,

so

so excessively ill, that the physician, who had arrived there before him, pronounced he could live but a very few hours.

Beaumont, notwithstanding his father's harshness, was much grieved at his death. He hoped he would soon have consented to the joining those hands whose hearts were long before united: but death, that threw its black veil before him, prevented Beaumont's hope, and left altogether doubtful.

The funeral of Mr. Hulatt being over, and Beaumont having, for decency's sake, stayed a proper time, he went to Mr. Urban, and revealed to him his love for his daughter; Mr. Urban was amazed, 'Sure, said he, you are not in earnest! A man of your immense fortune in love with Cleora! Can you, whom thousands would think themselves happy with, place your affection on a poor girl?'

Cleora now coming in prevented an answer, Beaumont throwing his arms round her neck, was so transported, so lost in extacy, that he could only pronounce——“My dear, dear Cleora, now we will never part any more.” Mr. Urban was astonished: he stood like a statue of surprize; but Beaumont, that faithful, that generous lover, now coming to himself, informed Mr. Urban of their mutual love.

Mr. Urban could not cease his surprize, while the lovely Cleora was so transported with the continuance of his affection, who was so dear to her, that she resigned herself up to the most perfect joy.

A very few days after this put Beaumont in possession of the most lovely of her sex; and these faithful lovers, who had suffered so many uneasy sensations, by the unnatural cruelty of a father, whose heart was wholly set on grandeur and riches, without once thinking love the chief ingredient of conjugal happiness, now find their constancy amply rewarded by the lasting pleasures of virtuous and mutual love; and they daily experience, in each others arms, those joys which none but those who love like them can feel or conceive.

F I N I S.

